A publication of

Needham Youth Services

Safe Surf: A Technology Safety Resource Guide



PARENT AND YOUTH INFORMATION



Sponsored by the Needham Exchange Club





Welcome to the fifth edition of **Safe Surf:** A **Technology Safety Resource Guide**. This booklet is the last phase of a project that started with a grant from the Needham Education Foundation, Inc. The program provides workshops for middle school students about Internet and technology safety, a presentation for parents regarding youth and the Internet, and this publication.

This online booklet has two sections: one for parents, and one for youth. Some of the information was taken directly from what middle school youth had to say at the Safe Surf workshops, while other information came from research articles and online resources. We encourage parents and youth to read this entire publication to learn additional tips on being safe with technology.

We would like to thank the Needham Exchange Club for underwriting this publication. We would also like to extend our sincere gratitude to the High Rock School for their continued support of this program. Finally, we would like to thank the students for their enthusiasm and participation during the workshops.

For more information, or for a hard copy of this booklet, please contact Needham Youth Services at 781-455-7500 or visit us online at www.needhamma.gov/youth. You can also "Like" us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/NeedhamYouthServices.

In 2013, sixth grade students at the High Rock School participated in a workshop led by Needham Youth Services that focused on Internet safety. The following is a summary of the survey they were asked to complete. For more information about the survey and its results, please contact Needham Youth Services at 781-455-7500.

- High Rock School students reported they spend the majority of their online time talking to friends, surfing websites, playing games and going on Youtube.com.
- The students surveyed report spending more time web surfing or visiting sites such as Youtube.com or music sites while online than anything else.
- Sixth graders at High Rock report spending an average of 1 hour and 50 minutes online everyday.
- The most popular responses for things that they themselves or others would do online that they wouldn't do in person included breaking up with someone, namecalling, and gossiping.
- The sixth graders surveyed report spending an equal amount of time web surfing as playing games, and an average of 23 more minutes per day on each of these than on schoolwork.
- 24% of students surveyed reported knowing someone who has been bullied or harassed online.
- Sixth graders report spending a total of 1 hour and 54 minutes per day communicating socially, using social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, as well as instant messaging, email and video chat.
- Just under 1/3 of sixth grade students have either Instagram or Facebook profiles.
- To their knowledge, 55% of sixth graders polled believe their parents *do not* monitor their Internet use.
- 86% of sixth graders polled use a cell phone, and 35% have a Smartphone (such as an iPhone or a Samsung Galaxy).
- On average, 6th graders report sending 28 text messages a day.
- When asked if they or someone they know have ever done or said anything online that they wouldn't say in person, 22% responded "YES."
- 70% of sixth graders at High Rock feel they can tell their parents all the websites they visit

In 2013, sixth grade students participated in a workshop that focused on Internet safety. Below is a sampling of the students' responses to the following questions:

What is something that goes on online that your parents might not know about?

- Amount of time IM'ing
- Having Facebook
- Cyber-bullying/harassment
- Chatting with people I don't know
- YouTube without permission
- Inappropriate: blogs, pop-ups, pictures, messages
- Spreading rumors
- Searching for presents for them
- Anonymous emailing
- Amount of time on Facebook
- Telling people about myself on Facebook
- Not knowing all my Facebook friends
- Rejection on Facebook, Twitter
- Prank calls
- Kids deleting Internet History
- All the distractions of the computer
- A lot of time spent texting
- Instagram

- Relationships online and at school
- Breaking-up and spreading rumors
- Having accounts on other websites that have my email address
- Swearing
- Playing games
- Facebook wall flirting
- Facebook teasing
- Fake websites
- Bad pictures/videos
- My friends
- Spam emails
- Skype
- Sent or forwarded messages
- YouTube bad words in comments
- Chat boxes
- Anonymous threats
- Searching bad websites
- Stalking

Name something you have done or said online that you wouldn't do/say in person.

- Swearing and leaving weird messages
- Telling a friend I was upset with them and why
- Saying bad things about other people
- Saying mean stuff
- Spreading rumors about people liking other people
- Saying I like someone
- Asking someone out
- Threatening to call parents
- Gossiping, rumors, harassing
- "You are spoiled"
- "You are ugly"
- "Shut-up"
- "Faggot"
- "I hate my brother"
- "Do you like me?"

- Calling people names
- Breaking up or making up
- Asking personal questions
- Apologizing
- Swear words
- Gossip
- Bullying
- Making fun of someone
- Cursing
- Threatening to tell guidance counselor
- Asking for gaming tips
- Lying
- Calling friends annoying

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PARENT INFORMATION



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Parenting in an Online World

Raising today's Internet-savvy generation can be challenging, as kids seem to know more about technology and to use the Internet differently from adults. The Internet is essential to our children's education, future careers, and lives. Even parents who are knowledgeable about computers might not fully understand how children use the Internet and how to help their own children have a safer and more enjoyable experience online. Although they may be miles ahead of us technologically, kids still need adults to help them develop good judgment and critical thinking skills in order to deal with the situations, information and people they encounter online.

Many parents worry that they don't know how to set Internet rules and guidelines because they are unsure of the risks. Think about the parenting messages you have been sending since your children were born:

- Don't talk to strangers
- Come home straight after school
- Be nice and don't pick fights
- Don't give out personal information
- Introduce your friends to us

These are the same principles you can apply to Internet safety. On the following pages you will find ideas, suggestions, and tried and true techniques for helping your children navigate their online world.

Safe surfing!

Where Are The Online Risks?

Where are youth likely to encounter dangers as they explore web pages, chat with friends, and do schoolwork?

Social Networking

- Rumors and gossip can be passed quickly.
- Many children/teens post pictures and personal information on their pages. Parents should be aware of the images their children post on the web.

Instant Messaging

- Rumors and gossip can be passed quickly by "IM"ing.
- Some IM sites require users to set up a "personal profile", putting children at risk for revealing personal information.

Ask.fm

- This is a question asking and answering site that allows users to publically ask questions to other users and receive public answers to those questions.
- Often content includes sexual or bullying language.
- This is similar to websites like formspring.com.

Web Sites

- While web surfing, it is easy to come across sites containing pornography, hate, violence, illegal, and/or dangerous content and activities.
- The web contains a great deal of inaccurate and misleading information.

Snap Chat

- This web app is used to send time-limited picture or video messages (which can include a small text caption) that go away after a predetermined period of time (1-10 seconds) as decided by the sender.
- The time-limit gives users a false sense of security in sending pictures or videos they might not feel comfortable sending via text message format (i.e. images containing inappropriate content).
- These pictures can be "screenshotted" which allows the receiver to save a copy of the photo to their phone before it gets deleted, so that they always have it. The sender will receive a notification if the receiver does in fact screenshot their photo.

Instagram

- A photo sharing web app that allows users to upload pictures to an account to share with their friends. Users are allowed to search through and comment on others' photos, as well as "like" them.
- Accounts can be private or public, with private requiring that the user accept the requests of other users to be able to view their profile and the pictures they post to it.
- This is a social media outlet such as Facebook or Twitter.

E-mail

- Most electronic mail accounts receive spam, or junk e-mail, and much of it is offensive or obscene.
- Viruses can be spread through e-mail.

Tumblr

- An online blogging site that allows users to create their own page on which they can post pictures, videos, and other multimedia files.
- Users can follow other users' blogs, as well as make their own blog private if they so choose.

Text Messaging, E-mailing, Instant Messaging, & Social Media

What's the Difference?

Many parents confuse these forums when their kids say they are 'chatting' online. While some technologies involve talking in 'real time,' there are important differences that have safety implications.

Text Messaging

This is an electronic form of short message communication used via cell phones. Cryptic conversations make messages difficult to monitor and the instant nature of text messaging presents an avenue for kids to be bullied/harassed.

Social Media

There are many websites on the Internet that fall under this category, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Tumblr. They are places that allow users to share personal information, thoughts, pictures, and interests with other users, "friends" or "followers".

Instant Messaging

In order to "IM", users create a profile and a contact list of friends to chat with. Messages pop up instantly while users are online. IM users can be visible or invisible to others and they can block people they don't know or don't want to communicate with. IM is a safer environment because it permits users to select the people they want to talk with. Facebook also has instant messaging capabilities, so users can chat with their Facebook "friends."

E-mailing

This is a more formal communication for kids and less popular than Instant Messaging or communicating via social networking site. Electronic messages are time delayed, as the sender and recipient are not communicating "instantly."

With all these forms of instant communication, kids may feel freer to say things electronically that they might never say face-to-face. There are positive and negative implications of such freedom.

Adapted from: www.bewebaware.ca/english/default.aspx

What Are The Online Risks?

| Bullies | Violence | Hate |
|-------------|--------------------|----------|
| Predators | Misinformation | Spam |
| Pornography | Internet Addiction | Gambling |

The following tips may help you support and protect your child online:

- Become familiar with how your child is using the Internet
- Keep all computers in a common, visible area in your home
- Monitor and supervise your child's Internet use
- Educate your child about the risks online
- Teach your child to be respectful when online
- Limit the amount of time spent online
- Encourage face-to-face friendships

 Remember that your children and their peers may be starting to use sites you have never heard of, so you won't always be able to monitor them directly.

The following technological tools may provide additional protection:

- Blocking Software This is software that uses a "bad site" list and blocks access to chosen sites.
- Filtering Filtering software uses certain keywords to block sites or sections of sites.
- Outgoing Filtering This software ensures that your child won't be able to share certain personal information with others online.
- Monitoring and Tracking Some software allows parents to track where their children go online, how much time they spend online, and how much time they spend on the computer.

But remember...

"Guard the mind first, then the computer."

The best thing you can do to keep your child safe on the internet is to educate them about the risks.

Adapted from: wiredkids.org, bewebaware.ca/english, and kidshield.com



Dear Safe Surf...

My kids immediately minimize the screen or click off whatever they are doing online if I walk into the room. What's going on?

According to the students we spoke with at the High Rock School, the key issues for adolescents are privacy and respect. As one student stated, "It feels like a violation when my parents look at what I'm doing over my shoulder. They would never listen in on a phone conversation, so why do they read my IMs?" Most of the students agreed they would tell their parents about what they do online, but they want to be *asked* rather than required to share information. Having a conversation with your child about

what they like to do on the internet or what websites they like to visit could be helpful, and also might help you to understand the Internet better.

I'm tempted to check the computer's History to see what websites my child has visited. Is this a good way to track?

Many parents review the History to see what is happening online in their home, but just as many children are deleting the History on a regular basis. The websites visited on your computer are stored in several ways on the hard drive, but tracking software may be a more efficient tool to monitor your children's Internet use. Like the previous situation, teenagers frequently find the checking of History to be invasive. Perhaps asking your child to share the History with you will seem less invasive, and it could be the start of a great discussion.

My kids are on Facebook constantly. I just can't figure out what the appeal is and why it is so important to be on this site practically 24/7.

Facebook and other sites such as Twitter and Instagram offer social networking opportunities for youth --- and the truth is that they are very compelling. On these sites you can list information about yourself, post pictures, connect with old friends, and meet new friends. As you did not grow up in such an electronic age, it may be difficult to fully appreciate why these sites are so important to your children. You might want to ask your children to show you these sites so that you can better understand their world.

Texting and IM - ing Lingo

Ever wonder what all those letters you see your kids typing mean? Here is a list of common acronyms that kids use while texting and IMing online.

bbl - Be back later

bf - Boyfriend

bff - Best friends forever

brb - Be right back

btw - By the way

cul8r / cya l8tr - See you later

ftw - For the win

g2g / gtg - I've got to go

af - Girlfriend

idk - I don't know

idc - I don't care

jk - Just kidding

Imao - Laughing my a** off

lol - Laughing out loud

nm - Never mind / not much

np - No problem

omg / zomg - Oh my God

pos - Parent over shoulder

rofl - Rolling on the floor laughing

thx - Thanks

ttyl - Talk to you later

wtf - What the F***

Overuse of the Internet

Computers and the web are great resources for kids, but sometimes they spend too much time online and lose out on other important things.

The risks include:

Lost sleep

It is very tempting to continue playing games or chatting with friends late into the night, but kids need their sleep.

Lost homework time

The computer, while necessary for many school assignments, is a powerful distraction; even if students are not online late into the night, they could still stay up late finishing homework because earlier in the day they were on the computer.

Lost time with friends and family

While the Internet allows kids to connect easily and instantly to their friends, it cannot replace face-to-face interaction. It's important for kids to spend real time with their peers. It's also important for them to spend real time with their family. Parents too are often guilty of spending too much time on the computer. Make sure to move away from electronics and make time to interact as a family.



Websites and Resources

www.bewebaware.ca/english

National, bilingual public education program on Internet safety

www.wiredsafety.org & www.stopcyberbullying.org

The world's largest Internet safety, help and education organization

www.getnetwise.org

Resources for parents to make informed decisions about their family's use of the Internet

www.internetsafety101.org

Expert advice to protect your child from the dangers of the internet

www.netsmartz.org/parents

Helpful resources for parenting children growing up in this technology era.

www.cyberangels.org

Cyber-neighborhood watch program promoting online safety education

www.netlingo.com

Online dictionary and listing of Internet definitions

www.kidshield.com

Tools and information for your children's online safety

www.kidshealth.org

Provides a variety of information for teens, kids and parents

Town and School

Resources for Parents

Needham Youth Services

Phone: 781-455-7500

Web site: www.needhamma.gov/youth

E-Mail: Needhamyouth@needhamma.gov

Facebook: Facebook.com/NeedhamYouthServices

Twitter: @Needham_Youth

- Individual, group and family counseling
- Substance Abuse Awareness Program
- Employment and Volunteer Programs
- A Conversation for Parents of Teens
- Parent Dialogue Meetings
- Needham Unplugged
- Suicide Prevention workshops
- Information on issues such as drugs/alcohol, bullying, harassment, loss and other mental health issues

Needham Public School Guidance Department

Guidance Office: 781-455-0800

General Info x 2144 Director Tom Denton x 2130

- Individual, group and crisis counseling
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YOUTH INFORMATION



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My Parents Don't Understand The Internet!

Do you remember the first time you realized that you knew more about the Internet than your parents? Maybe it was one of these things that gave it away:

- Your mom or dad said, "When I was your age we didn't have the Internet..."
- Your parents get confused with IM, brb, P2P, and Iol.
- Your parents still use the term "cyber" for anything online.
- They double click everything...

Welcome to the technology-generation divide. You probably do know a lot more about how to use the computer and how to navigate online than your parents. Your parents are still doing what they do best, however, which is making and enforcing rules to try and keep you safe. This can be frustrating if you think your parents have to be experts to create Internet rules.

They Don't Know What They Are Talking About!

Okay, so they still don't know what "lol" means and they think you only have one screen name, but they do know a thing or two about safety. Whether online or face-to-face, the old safety rules still apply, and those are the ones your parents rely upon as you explore the Internet.

The Internet may be still unfamiliar territory for many parents. Help ease your parent's fears by teaching them about your Internet use.

Safe surfing!





Dear Safe Surf...

My parents want to know everything I do online, and they even check my History to see what sites I've been on! Why are they invading my privacy?

The Internet is a great place to explore, learn, and hang out, and your parents want to make sure you understand the dangers that exist online. When you enter information on a web site or any place on the Internet, you're giving up a bit of your privacy. At best, your name could wind up in some database, probably to be used to sell you something now or later. At worst, it could be used to harm or exploit you.

Some web sites are wonderful, others are not as good, and some contain so-called "adult" images and other material that are not appropriate for teens. Still others are demeaning, racist, sexist, and violent or contain false information. Some of these sites contain material that can be disturbing, even for adults.

Therefore, it's important that you and your parents communicate about your online activities, including when you can go online, how long you can stay online, and what activities you can do online. Communicating with your parents doesn't mean that you have to give up your privacy. It just means that you come to an agreement based on mutual trust and understanding. You can also help your parents better understand the Internet and how it is helpful for teens.

My parents are always trying to monitor me on Facebook and it is super frustrating. How can I get them to trust me and what I do online?

Social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are a great way to express yourself, share media, and maintain connections with friends. On the flip side they may also allow too many people to have \rightarrow

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access to you and your personal life including some people who may have some not-so-friendly intentions.

For example photos you post of yourself can be copied, manipulated, and posted elsewhere. Remember once you have posted anything online it is stored there even after you delete it. Therefore, your parents have legitimate reasons for being concerned. However, it also seems like you have a solid understanding of some of the ways to keep yourself safe online so your best bet to get them off your back would be to invite them to check out your personal profile. Some of the areas your parents will be interested in are: what security settings you have enabled, what photos you have posted, what personal information is included on your profile, who you allow to access your page, and what applications you have chosen on your page.

My parents have no idea how much bullying goes on online. Kids are constantly lying or saying mean things, pretending to be someone else on IM, or threatening each other. How can my parents possibly help with that?

When you're online, especially while IMing or Facebook chatting, there is a chance that you'll get messages that are demeaning, harassing, or just plain mean. Even people who are nice in the "real" world can forget their manners when they go online. Your parents may not know the extent of bullying that goes on online, which is why it's important to tell them. A parent or trusted adult can help you figure out how to handle the bullying, but they can't help you if they don't know what is happening.

Some messages, however, may constitute harassment, which is a crime under federal law. In this case, it's important that you inform your parents, the school, and/or the authorities so they can help you put a stop to it. Massachusetts has just passed a new law that cracks down on bullying both in school and online. No one should have to put up with rude, threatening, or unwanted messages, and we are all responsible for our own behavior online.

Hopefully this has been helpful to understand a little more about why parents worry about the Internet, and what they can do to help you stay safe.

Adapted from: http://www.safeteens.com Resource: www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw10/sl100092

Safety Tips

Awareness of Internet dangers is the first step towards staying safe online. Here are some important things to consider:

Never give out personal information to someone you don't trust

Personal information includes your name, the names of friends or family, your address, phone number, or school name. This also includes pictures of yourself, your IM, or your e-mail address. **REMEMBER:** Nothing posted online is ever truly private. Even if you delete something, it could have been forwarded or re-posted many times; something posted once is essentially there forever.

Don't believe everything you read

Just because someone online tells you that they are 15 doesn't mean they are telling the truth. Even adults can't tell when a male pretends to be a female or a 50 year-old pretends to be a 15-year old online.

Protect yourself

Never arrange to meet in person someone you met online unless your parents go with you. Also make sure it is in a public place.

Never open email from someone you do not know

Just delete strange e-mails. If in doubt about it, ask your parents, guardian, or another adult. Strange e-mails or spam (junk mail) can contain viruses.

Use Netiquette

Be polite to others online just as you would offline. Be aware of bullying, rumors, and gossip while IMing, texting and e-mailing. Be respectful while using technology.

It's okay to tell

If you find something online that makes you feel uncomfortable or scares you, tell an adult. Kids and parents are learning this together, and everyone wants the Internet to be a fun, safe place.

Adapted from http://www.cyberangels.org

What Is Cyberbullying?



Cyberbullying is sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices, such as texting using a cell phone. This kind of bullying includes:

- Sending cruel, vicious, and sometimes threatening messages.
- Harassing someone by repeatedly sending cruel messages.
- Creating web sites that have stories, cartoons, pictures, and jokes ridiculing others.
- Posting pictures of classmates online and asking students to rate them, with questions such as "Who is the biggest ____ (add a derogatory term)?"
- Breaking into an e-mail or social networking account and sending vicious or embarrassing material to others.
- Masquerading and pretending to be someone else online.
- Purposefully passing along embarrassing or private information about someone else.
- Engaging someone in IM, tricking that person into revealing sensitive personal information, and/or forwarding that information to others.
- Excluding someone from an online group.
- Taking a picture of a person in the locker room using a digital phone camera and sending that picture to others.
- Posting cruel messages or personal information on a public site or profile with the intention of hurting or embarrassing someone.

Some teens believe they have the right to say whatever they want to online with little regard for privacy or consequences. Others think it's a violation to "tell" adults about what goes on for teens online. Bullying is not okay in any forum, and it does not belong on the Internet. There are even federal laws that criminalize bullying and Massachusetts has just passed a new law that cracks down on bullying both in school and online.

Adapted from: http://www.cyberbully.org Resource: www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw10/sl100092

Netiquette for Instant Messaging

"Netiquette" is network etiquette, the do's and don'ts of online communication. Netiquette covers both common courtesy online and the informal "rules of the road" of cyberspace. This also applies to text messaging.

Knock Before You Enter

Inquire if the other party can instant message/receive texts.

Be Brief

Think short. Instant messages aren't meant to be long-winded.

Watch What You Write

Don't write anything in an IM or text that you wouldn't write in an e-mail or say in person. Don't let your emotions rule your typing: if you're upset or mad, log off for a while.

Keep It Casual

Instant messages are not replacements for serious, face-to-face communications. Also, things can "sound different" online. Without facial expressions and tone of voice, it's hard to tell when someone is joking and some things might seem harsh when read from a screen.

Go Easy on the Jargon

Don't overuse acronyms or abbreviations.

One Step at a Time

Be careful with multi-tasking. Better to do one or two things well than three or four poorly.

Hide-and-Seek

Don't use the instant messaging program to spy on your friends by going online under a secret screen name.

Adapted from: http://www.pcworld.com

Overuse of the Internet

There are so many great things about computers and the web: chatting with friends, playing games, doing research for school, but it's possible to have too much of a good thing. If you spend too much time online, you'll be missing out on other important stuff.

Lost sleep

It is very tempting to continue playing games or chatting with friends late into the night, but sleep is important too.

Lost homework time

How many times have you stayed up late doing homework that you could have finished earlier if you weren't on the computer? A good strategy is trying to finish your work before you even turn on the computer. Or, if you have to use the computer for school work, sign out of Facebook and IM or disconnect from the Internet entirely to avoid distraction. You'll likely get your work done faster and therefore have more free time.

Lost time with friends and family

While the Internet is great for connecting with friends quickly and easily, it cannot replace face-to-face time. It's important to spend real time with your friends. It's also important to spend real time with your family. Parents are also guilty of spending too much time on the computer. Try to pick a time with your parents when everyone signs off of the computer and spends time together talking or playing a game.



Websites and Resources

www.cyberangels.org

World's oldest and largest Internet safety organization.

www.safechild.org

Provides accurate links to websites regarding health and safety.

www.isafe.org

Teaching kids and teens how to be safe on the Internet.

www.parentyouradolescent.com

Gives free and extended responses to questions from parents and teens.

www.cyberbullying.org

Information and resources about online bullying.

www.cybertipline.com

Handles leads from individuals reporting the sexual exploitation of children.

www.safeteens.com

A place for parents and teens to learn how to use the Internet safely.

www.kids.getnetwise.org

Information and resources for kids and families.



Town and School

Resources for Parents

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